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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 880  
By Chumney

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Kevin Longinotti and to urge the Mayor and Council of Metropolitan Nashville-Davidson County to install a siren-based emergency warning system.

WHEREAS, on the afternoon of April 16, 1998, a tornado devastated parts of northern Middle Tennessee, including Nashville and Davidson County, resulting in widespread property damage and personal injury; and

WHEREAS, tragically, the tornado toppled a tree in Centennial Park in Nashville, fatally injuring Vanderbilt senior and ROTC cadet Kevin Longinotti of Memphis, who was due to graduate in a few weeks; Kevin died 18 days later; and

WHEREAS, Kevin Longinotti, at 22 years of age, was the eldest son of Mrs. Debbie Longinotti Slepicka, and would have graduated cum laude with a triple major in mathematics, special education and special disabilities children. He had planned to enter the United States Army and to eventually earn a doctorate and work with disabled children; and

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WHEREAS, since Kevin's death, Mrs. Slepicka has worked ceaselessly for the installation of a siren-based emergency warning system in Nashville-Davidson County to warn the citizenry of impending tornadoes and other natural disasters; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Slepicka has approached the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (TEMA), U.S. Senator Fred Thompson and Metropolitan Nashville-Davidson County government officials concerning the need for warning sirens; her efforts have borne partial results; and

WHEREAS, Vanderbilt University has installed its own system of sirens on campus, and other systems are in place or under consideration in other cities and campuses, including Brentwood, Jackson, Lebanon, Tullahoma, Austin Peay State University, Motlow State Community College, and Middle Tennessee State University; and

WHEREAS, in 1998 the Metro Council requested the Mayor and the Office of Emergency Management to consider the feasibility of erecting an alarm or siren emergency warning system; when the Metro administration decided to concentrate on funding a weather radio system instead, a second resolution was introduced calling for the installation of a siren system in the urban services district only; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Slepicka does not believe that a radio warning alone is sufficient to protect the Metro population from natural disasters and has stated that: "My greatest fear is that another tornado could go through, damage a school and kill children, or hit a neighborhood and kill people"; and

WHEREAS, the installation of a siren-based emergency warning system in Nashville-Davidson County would make a great contribution toward ensuring the safety of a major population center in a tornado-prone area of this state; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we hereby urge the Mayor and Council of Metropolitan Nashville-

Davidson County to install a siren-based emergency warning system in Nashville-Davidson County to augment weather radio and television warning systems to protect its citizens who in times of weather related danger are out of contact with radio or television warnings.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we honor the memory of a bright and compassionate young Tennessean, Kevin Longinotti, whose life of promise and achievement was cut short as a result of the 1998 tornado in Nashville.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we extend our deepest condolences to Mrs. Deborah Longinotti Slepicka, her family, and Kevin's many friends, and express our hope that the installation of an emergency warning system in Metropolitan Nashville-Davidson County will eventually occur as a memorial to Kevin's life.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.